

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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64

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 MC-02 ACDA-05 AID-05 /085 W

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R 021709Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1340

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR 5740

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMAKO 1624

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, NG, ML, UV

SUBJ: MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE

REF: OUAGADOUGOU 1021

1. OUR ASSESSMENT CURRENT STATE OF BORDER DISPUTE
CORRESPONDS GENERALLY WITH REFTEL.

2. DOUKARA RECENTLY TOLD ME THAT MALIANS WERE NOW
PREPARED TO RELEASE THE UPPER VOLTAN PRISONERS TO
MILITARY SUB-COMMISSION WHEN NEXT IT COMES TO MALI.

3. I ASKED DOUKARA IF MALIAN TROOPS WERE STILL IN
DISPUTED ZONE. HE SAID THEY WERE NOT AND THAT IF IT
WENT TO SIKASSO I COULD SEE THEM AT VARIOUS POINTS
ALONG THE WAY. THIS DEPLOYMENT TENDS TO SUPPORT
THE THESIS THAT IN THE EVENT OF A VOLTAN ATTACK,
THE MALIAN RIPOSTE WOULD BE A DRIVE ON BOBO DIOULASSO.

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4. DOUKARA IS FULLY AWARE OF THE VOLTAN ARMS BUILD-UP WHICH HE SAYS DOESN'T WORRY HIM AT ALL. BOTH HE AND THE PRESIDENT PROFESS TO HAVE A RATHER LOW OPINION OF VOLTAN MILITARY CAPABILITIES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF MALI, SAYING THAT SINCE VOLTAN AND MALIAN OFFICERS WENT TO THE SAME MILITARY SCHOOLS TOGETHER "WE KNOW WHERE THEY STOOD IN CLASS, AND THEY KNOW WHERE WE STOOD." THE CONSENSUS IN THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE IS THAT THE VOLTAN WOULD BE NO MATCH FOR THE MALIANS, THOUGH THERE ARE NONE OF MY COLLEAGUES WHOM I WOULD CONSIDER TO BE EXPERT ON THIS SUBJECT. ALL AGREE ALSO THAT THE MALIANS WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO BE GIVEN AN EXCUSE TO COUNTER-ATTACK. (IN ONE OF HIS MORE EBULLIENT MOMENTS, DOUKARA SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD THE VOLTAN DEFENSE MINISTER THAT IF THE VOLTANS ATTACKED, HE, DOUKARA, WOULD PERSONALLY LEAD HIS TROOPS INTO OUAGADOUGOU THE SAME DAY.)

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE MEDIATION COMMISSION, BOTH DOUKARA AND THE PRESIDENT CLAIM THAT UPPER VOLTA HAS NOT PRESENTED ANY DOCUMENTATION, EXCEPT FOR THE INFAMOUS 1960 MAP, TO SUBSTANTIATE THEIR CLAIM.

6. MALIAN PRESS AND RADIO HAS BEEN TOTALLY SILENT ON BORDER ISSUE SINCE CEAO MEETING. MALIAN OFFICIALS ARE RELAXED AND SUPREMELY CONFIDENT. (PRESIDENT TRAORE IS CURRENTLY TOURING ARAB COUNTRIES.) WE CAN ONLY HOPE THAT REASON WILL PREVAIL OR THAT RAINS WILL COME EARLY, BUT THERE IS NO SIGN OF EITHER.
MCGUIRE

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NNN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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